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April 18, 2007

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE**  
**ON PUBLIC HEALTH AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

The Committee on Public Health and Public Safety convened on April 18, 2007, with Chairman William White presiding and Committee Members Aldermen Walter Pero and Dennis Sullivan also present and voting. Also present were Chief Fire Engineer Kevin Kelleher, Gerry Boyle, Mr. St. Clair, Michael Lambert from the Mayor's Office and Matt Buckley from the Law Office.

The committee took a tour of the Fire Department's facilities and a summary follows:

**Public Safety Trailer**

- Placed into service on December 24, 1998 as a temporary measure after a flood
- Space is inadequate for meetings and storage
- Also used to house Engine 3, the busiest company in the city
- Air quality has been tested and no problems have been found

Chairman White indicated that he would schedule a committee meeting to review air quality issues and to discuss the reports with the city's Environmental Officer.

**Lowell Street Station:**

- Built in 1963
- Originally housed Engines 4 & 5
- Now houses the Tower truck and Engine 4
- The Tower truck is a specialized piece of equipment and requires special training, therefore other companies cannot be brought in to man it
- Engine 4 is operational only when there is manpower available, approximately 20% of the time
- Building upkeep is being performed by fire fighters
- There are leaks in the front of the building

The Chief does not like the building, but being situated at the bottom of the hill, it provides good serviceability. Chief Kelleher told the members that he does discuss with the Administration the fact that Engine 4 isn't operational for much of the time.

**Highland Ave.:**

- Houses Engine 7, the Mass DECON unit and the District Fire Chief
- The DECON unit is a regional piece of equipment that is used to decontaminate hospitals
- The roof in the kitchen area leaks
- The wall is cracked
- Money was earmarked 5 years ago to renovate the restroom, but the work was never done
- The roof and back wall leak in the living quarters
- The ceiling in the officers' quarters appears ready to fall

**Teele Square:**

- Houses Engine 6 and Ladder 3
- The DPW will address an old beam in the cellar
- The kitchen has been remodeled
- Overall, the facility is in decent shape

**Headquarters:**

- Houses the main office, Engines 1 & 2 and Ladder 2
- Station was painted last year
- Work on the doors was completed utilizing funds from a Homeland Security grant through Capital Projects
- The mobile air unit is located in this facility and is used to refill oxygen bottles
- The repair shop is located at this facility
- The window in the Chief's office is in disrepair

Chief Kelleher told the members that Somerville has a regional Hazardous Materials Response Team vehicle, however, the unit is not manned by Somerville personnel. Responding to a question regarding elections, Chief Kelleher stated that having citizens vote at the station causes chaos, and although it is not an ideal situation, the department adapts.

Chairman White's motion that the following information be provided to the committee, was approved:

- A complete list of personnel assigned to each engine company, to include equipment and staffing.
- The square footage of the Fire Prevention trailer and the yearly amounts paid for the trailers since they were placed in service.
- A list of all known leaks and repairs needed at all buildings
- A list of planned capital improvements for the Fire Department
- Is the Highland Ave. station upgrade going to be similar to the upgrade performed at Teele Square?
- Is the Highland Ave. station upgrade going to be a capital project?

No papers were acted on.

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Alderman William White, Chairman  
Committee on Public Health and Public Safety

## **COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report of the Committee on Public Health and  
Public Safety, April 18, 2007

In Board of Aldermen

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Clerk